

Plagiarism as an Act of Academic Crime: A Critical overview in an Islamic & Modern Perspective

*Dr. Khushbakht Hina**

ABSTRACT

Plagiarism is a cheating in form of stealing the ideas or language of others, which is morally and ethically crime and it's also an offense. In the field of education plagiarism is an academic fraud, therefore it is considered a theft. In material world the things which belong to us are considered our property; same is the case in academic world ideas, concepts words and work which belong to us are known as "intellectual property". Thus, we cannot use or cite others' academic work without permission. Islam is the only religion that advocates for knowledge seeking and sharing with others. So sharing useful knowledge is *Sadqa-e-Jāriya*. But this does not mean to attain knowledge and overlook the real source of knowledge. In this connection individual has to give credit whenever one uses the work of others anywhere. Hence, if we are using the work of others and do not cite the source and acknowledge the real author, we indulge ourselves in "Plagiarism" or in academic fraud. So in this scenario, academic world copyright or authorship is important. In recent terminology these are known as "intellectual property rights". In present era deceiving and harming of others has become common. In academia, "intellectual frauds" are more common nowadays. The objective of this article is to highlight the Islamic perspective in the avoidances of plagiarism. In this regard, Qur'ānic verses and Ahādīth have been used for exploring how Islam has indicated the avoidances of plagiarism. The main theme of this paper is to highlight and explore the Islamic vision regarding the academic theft and current preventive practices in Pakistan. It is suggested & concluded that in Islam plagiarism is prohibited. It also indicates the terms & conditions for the use of academic work of other scholars. There is dire need that the Muslim experts should also revive new Islamic copyright rules and regulation for honest academic writing.

Keywords: *Plagiarism, Academic fraud, Islamic vision, concepts, Practices & prevention, Pakistan*

* Assistant Professor, Research & Regional campuses cell - Academics branch (NUML), HEC Nominee Anti -Plagiarism.

Introduction:

Concept of Plagiarism in Islam

In the recent era plagiarism is a big issue and challenge for higher education institutions in the context of quality. Therefore Plagiarism has become a matter of great concern in Academia. Plagiarism in any form is not permit in Islam. It disintegrates the basic estimation of scholastic research, ruptures moral rules and good contemplations and is considered by researchers like Gibaldi,⁽¹⁾ Colon,⁽²⁾ Al-Suyūṭī,⁽³⁾ and Ange'lil-Carter⁽⁴⁾ a type of crime and theft. Stealing in Islam is clearly prohibited as it is revealed:

﴿وَالسَّارِقُ وَالسَّارِقَةُ فَاقْطَعُوا أَيْدِيَهُمَا جِزَاءً بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَالًا مِنَ اللَّهِ...﴾⁽⁵⁾

"as for the man who is a thief and the woman who is a thief cut off their hands in requital for what they have reaped."

Coping other writings and presenting them as one's own thought is a kind of plagiarism that is unlawful in the Sharī'ah and man-made law. People think plagiarism in Islam does not even exist because there are no copyrights in Islam. As a matter of fact, there are no copyrights in Qur'ān and Hadith only we don't own Islamic texts (verses, Ahādīth, quotes of the Ṣaḥabah and so on) we can own them because Allah owns His verses – Allah owns us all. No matter what we possess belongs to Allah not the people, and Allah has given us the choice of giving away what belong to us. No one else can claim each other's possession. So in this world, what write and sketch, belongs to you, what you wear belongs to you, what you eat belongs to you, what you earn belongs to you. Unless you choose to give it away – for the sake of Allah who has given you all of those above.⁽⁶⁾ Knowledge is a common property, it is true that use of other knowledge is allowed because it helps in enhancement and extension of knowledge and it is nothing wrong but citing the original thinker is a condition. So we can attain knowledge from any source but we cannot takeover people's possession.

Islam encourage Muslim to learn to know but to respect the law of ownership, people have rights to their material property as well as to their intellectual property. Allah says in Qur'ān:

-
- (1) Gibaldi, J., *MLA handbook for writers of research papers* (6th Ed, New Delhi: Affiliated East-West Press Private Limited, 2003)
 - (2) Colon, A, *Avoid the pitfalls of plagiarism*. Writer, 114(1), 8.
 - (3) See the book of Al-Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn, *Al-Fāriq bayn al-Muṣannif wa al-Sāriq*. Bayrūt: 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1419.A.H, Bairut.
 - (4) Ange'lil-Carter, S, *Stolen language? Plagiarism in writing* (Harlow: Longman)
 - (5) Sūrah Al-Mā'idah:38
 - (6) Ayeina.com/is-plagiarism-allowed-in-Islam.

"O you, who believe, fulfill the contracts". ⁽¹⁾

Ḥaḍrat Muḥammad ﷺ said:

"If anyone has a covenant with a people then it is not lawful for him to violate it or alter it till its expiry" ⁽²⁾

Hence, it is not permitted in Islam to be taken by others' property without his consent. ⁽³⁾

Islam disallows duplicating, falsifying, and robbery. The Qur'ān condemns fraudsters, the individuals who make a bogus portrayal of a self-evident certainty by words or by lead, or on the other hand by covering of what ought to have been revealed. The Qur'ān additionally cautions those "who celebrate in what they have executed also, as to be applauded for what they did not do – never think of them (to be) in security from the discipline, and for them is an agonizing discipline." ⁽⁴⁾

This verse indicates that individuals who appropriate and would like to be credited with what they do not merit. Literary theft may likewise be interpreted as the meaning of distortion of the materials or false articulations about the degree of an exploration examine. False proclamation or declaration (shahādat al-zūr) is condemn in the Qur'ān ⁽⁵⁾

Concept of Plagiarism in the light of Islamic History

Islam is a religion of humanity and stresses on rights of the others. Islam stresses on knowledge ('ilm) seeking and its sharing with others. Basically the purpose of education is the training of human mind. In Islam education is compulsory for all. The last prophet says:

«طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ» ⁽⁶⁾

"Seeking knowledge is a duty upon every Muslim".

For spreading the knowledge there is need to collect or write and publish for others. In era of Ḥaḍrat Muḥammad the complete "Holy Qur'ān" was revealed on him but in time of first caliph Ḥaḍrat Abu baker Qur'ān was preserved in the form of book. In early times of Muslim there was no idea and awareness of copyright in context of writing. Same is the case in the writing of Ahādīth the major work was seen in the time period of caliph 'Umar bin 'Abdul 'Azīz. Who collected the material and ordered to arrange the work of scholars. Thus for the sake of authenticity and validity

(1) Sūrah Al-Mā'idah:1

(2) Tirmadhi, The Book on Military Expeditions, Chapter: What Has Been Related About Breaking Treaties, Hadith: 1580

(3) Moten, A.R. (2014) Retrieve from http://irep.iium.edu.my/45425/1/Academic_dishonesty_2014.pdf

(4) Sūrah Āl 'Imrān:188

(5) Sūrah Al-Furqān:72; Sūrah Al-Hajj:30

(6) Sunan Ibn-Mājah, The Book of the Sunnah, Hadith: 224

rules and procedure were followed which were known as Al Jarḥ & Al Ta'dīl⁽¹⁾

Hence, at that time copyright idea was not common as it is today. Now in modern machine and technological era where knowledge has no boundaries due to super invention of internet and e-data base in which information and material is available on single click. Therefore in this modern era intellectual property right laws are available. There is need that in Islamic academic world rules must be designed regarding Islamic permit quotations.

Plagiarism in the light of Islamic Perspective (Holy Qur'ān & Aḥādīth)

Islam is the religion of humanity, which is based on pure feeling and emotion of love, sincerity and truthfulness for every member of society, it also expects that the members of Muslim society, either Muslim or non-Muslim will fulfill the promise with truthfulness and faithful. As a result cheating and fraud are not tolerable in society. Consequently all these types and forms which have been discussed above are prohibited in Islam. There are many types and forms of plagiarism, Islam strictly prohibited all form of stealing fraud or plagiarism support. In this perspective following Verses of Qur'ān and Aḥādīth are;

﴿وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتُدْلُوا بِهَا إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوا فَرِيقًا مِنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْإِثْمِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾⁽²⁾

"And do not consume one another's wealth unjustly or send it (in bribery) to the rulers in order that (they might aid) you (to) consume a portion of the wealth of the people in sin, while you know (it is unlawful)".

Allah says in "Qur'ān" don't use the wealth of others without their permission, here use of any other property either in the form of money or in the form of any good or material is strictly prohibited unless and until if there is any legal justification. So in Qur'ān, Allah Almighty simply restricts all types of plagiarism or frauds.

Last prophet Ḥaḍrat Muḥammad says that:

"Haram neither should be inflicted nor should be reciprocated"⁽³⁾

This Hādīth indicates that if any one imposes the haram on other in form of stealing the idea or work of original author, all type of fraud or

(1) Amanullah , M., "Author's Copyright: An Islamic Perspective, *Journal of world intellectual property*", 9.no. 3 (May 2006): 301–315.

(2) Al-Baqarah:188

(3) *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, The Chapters on Rulings, Chapter: One Who Builds Something On His Own Property that harms His Neighbor, Hadith: 2341

deceiving is forbidden in Islam. In Islam fraud and stealing are great crimes and sins. Saying of Holy Prophet Haḍrat Muḥammad as cited in Sunan Ibn Mājah:

"Every traitor will have a banner on the day of Resurrection and it will be said: this is the betrayer of so and so" ⁽¹⁾

Regarding plagiarism the concept of Islam is very much clear. Here the researcher wants to quote the saying of AL-Ghazali, according to him once Aḥmad bin Ḥambal was dealing the case about narration of Hadith explored in any other manuscript what should do, either copy and write for own is right ? Or there is need to take permission before use of any manuscript. Aḥmad Bin Ḥambal replied that person must get the permission first and then or she can write. As a result in Islamic perspective without citation of original sources we cannot use the work of others.

In Qur'ān Allah Almighty said:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا﴾ ⁽²⁾

"Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing"

Islam is the religion of purity, love and truthfulness and it emphasizes to give the rights of others. In Islam cheating and deceiving is a sin, in recent era people have lost their truthfulness and they displayed unethical behavior. Thus without working hard taking credit is wrong, everyone knows that intelligent as well as creative writing is an art that is very difficult. But if someone takes the words and ideas of others and presents as its own is an act of fraud and intentional lie which is a sin.

In Sūrah Al-Anfāl Allah says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَخُونُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ وَتَخُونُوا أَمَانَاتِكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾ ⁽³⁾

"O you who believe! Betray not Allah and His Messenger, nor betray knowingly your Amanat (things entrusted to you, and all the duties which Allah has ordained for you)".

(1) *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, The Chapters on Jihad, Hadith: 2872

(2) Sūrah Al-Nisā':4/58

(3) Sūrah Al-Anfāl:27

Therefore after exploring the verses of Qur'ān it is clear that taking credit of someone else work is not permitted in Islam, it is an act of fraud and sin. Amanullah⁽¹⁾ quoted the argument of Al- Suyāṭī, he stated the Ahādīth of Prophet Haḍrat Muḥammad:

"You should provide mutual advices regarding knowledge because deception of anyone of you in his knowledge is more serious than his deception in his wealth"⁽²⁾

In above stated Ahādīth prophet stated that dishonest or kidnapping of knowledge is "haram" so deception is dishonesty which is "plagiarism" In another hadith, Prophet Haḍrat Muḥammad pointed out that

"He who credits himself with what was not given to him is like one who wears a double cloak of deception."⁽³⁾

on this hadith (Ibn-al- Manzūr) stated the person who credited himself as he knows that it's not his or her credit it's a sin. He said that people must know that Allah is aware what they are doing. There are many Ahādīth and verses of Qur'ān related to plagiarism.

Hence in short, as Muslim we should present our self as a model for other, as we all are followers of Haḍrat Muḥammad (ﷺ). Despite the fact that being a Muslim our values must be high, among us who are deceiving or cheating might fall in category or form of Hypocrites, as Haḍrat Muḥammad (ﷺ) said:

"There are four characteristics, whoever has all of them is a true hypocrite, and whoever has one of them has one of the qualities of a hypocrite until he gives it up: when he is trusted, he betrays; when he speaks, he lies; when he makes a promise, he breaks it; and when he disputes, he resorts to slander."⁽⁴⁾

According to Amanullah,⁽⁵⁾ in Muslim work where mostly scholars use the reference from Qur'ān and Sunah , this type of quotation is allowed but it does not mean to quote long or wrong quotations. He further adds that quotation based on 15 words be allowed but if this rule is not followed it may be considered the plagiarism or dishonesty of academic writing.

-
- (1) Amanullah, M. "Author's Copyright: An Islamic Perspective", Journal of world intellectual property, 9, no.3, (May 2006) 301–315
 - (2) 'Alī bin Husāmuddīn, Kanz Al-'Ummāl, Dār Al-Fikr, Bayrūt, Hadīth no. 29285
 - (3) Muhammad bin Yazīd Abu 'Abd Allah, In Muhammad Fu'ād Abd Al-Bāqī (ed.) *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr) Vol.1, 81–82
 - (4) Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, Dār Tauq Al-Najah, 1422, A.H, Hadith no.33, 16/1
 - (5) Amanullah, M. "Author's Copyright: An Islamic Perspective", Journal of world intellectual property, 301–315

Plagiarism: Modern Perspective

The term Plagiarism is derived from the Latin language, it comes from "Plagiarius" which means kidnapping, ⁽¹⁾so Plagiarism is a criminal activity, because it involves stealing someone's ideas and using it as their own without giving the credit where the credit is due. According to Oxford dictionary " Plagiarism is an action or practice related with taking someone's else working coping and showing as their own is also known as literary or kidnapping the ideas of others. This concept was introduced in early seventeenth century. At that time, it was considered a literary crime, then in early nineteenth century it was recognized as crime and in the context of its warning and its consequences "Plagiarism was highlighted in the academic world.

University of California describes the Plagiarism in following words, "for any research supporting material is needed. but this supporting material means work of others, it is very obvious to use the work of others but do need to credit them and acknowledge the real author, either you are paraphrasing and summarizing the information found in any book or article, proper citation and referencing is the ethic of honest academic writing.

Concept and Nature of Plagiarism

In western world exclusively, research and strategies are available on Plagiarism but in the case of Muslim world there is a lack of research, and most of the time for this important issue Muslim scholars do not consider it. But in western world, plagiarism is taken as an academic, ethical and legal issue therefore over all the world this issue has been received good attention in higher education institutions and authorities.

According to the definition of Yale University⁽²⁾, the university has a view that plagiarism means use of words, work and ideas of others without paper citation and attribution is known as Plagiarism. According to them there are different types of Plagiarism. Such as (a) using language without question, using data or information without Reforms and attribution. Paraphrasing the ideas of others as these are new and original, publish with your own name it is known as "plagiarism". ⁽³⁾

Symptoms of Plagiarism

-
- (1) Harper, D. (2014). Online etymology dictionary. Retrieved January 22, 2014 from [http:// www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=plagiarism](http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=plagiarism).
 - (2) Yale University. (2014). What is plagiarism? Retrieved May 12, 2014 from [http:// writing.yalecollege.yale.edu/advice-students/using-sources/understanding-and-avoiding-plagiarism/what-plagiarism](http://writing.yalecollege.yale.edu/advice-students/using-sources/understanding-and-avoiding-plagiarism/what-plagiarism).<http://ctl.yale.edu/writing/using-sources/understanding-and-avoiding-plagiarism/what-plagiarism>
 - (3) Yale University. (2014). What is plagiarism?

- Language barriers
- Time management
- Cultural perspective
- Pressure to achieve high grades
- Not care the unethical behavior
- Lack of creative writing skill
- Unawareness regarding citation

<https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism>

Plagiarism Types and Forms

Academic cheating and dishonesty in academic writing is becoming more common and big issue which is spreading widely in higher education institutions. This is due to technology and internet revolution. Through internet all data is available on single click and mostly people cut copy and paste the material without the citation. Here the role of universities is important there is a need that universities should give attention on academic integrity and quality honest academic writing.

Jalāl Al-Dīn Suyūṭī,⁽¹⁾ was the Muslim scholar, the author of the famous book regarding Plagiarism. Titled *Al-Farq bayn al-Musannif wal-Sāriq* (meaning is different between original author and thief) the person who uses the work of others without acknowledgement or proper permission.

In unlawful activity there are two things, which need to be highlighted. For instance intentional Plagiarism and unintentional Plagiarism. In addition this may to reduce the spectrum of Plagiarism. It is essential to know the types or forms of Plagiarism.

- Word by word
- Sentence structure
- Cut copy paste
- Patch word plagiarism
- Wrong quotation and sources
- Authorship
- False citation
- Self-plagiarism
- Secondary sources
- Complete plagiarism: ⁽²⁾

(1) Jalāl Al-Dīn bin ‘Abd Al-Raḥmān Al-Suyūṭī, *Al-Fariq bayna al-Musannif wa al-Sāriq*, published as an appendix with the *Proceedings of Nadwat Huqūq al-Mu’allif: Madkhal Islami*

(2) Eassom, H. (2013). 10 types of plagiarism in research. Retrieved from: <http://exchanges.wiley.com/blog/2015/11/12/10-types-of-plagiarism-in-research/>

Practice and Prevention in Pakistan

In the era of 2000, HEC⁽¹⁾ strived hard for improvement in higher education of Pakistan, especially their focus was to improve research culture and creative work. Other than that time mostly work which was published mostly copied from different sources of books and internet. As a result the new expression was introduced in the name of "Plagiarism" the meaning of this word is kidnapping the ideas of others or copy the material of others without the citations. Due to this factor in many universities plagiarized work was published. Therefore to stop this practice HEC has taken the initiative and has been working effectively to deal with this issue in an academic world of Pakistan. For this sake HEC has set the goal to ensure the students and "academia work security" in form of intellectual property right and in addition aware the others regarding this unethical, serious action and its consequences. For the prevention of plagiarism HEC hired the web-based service with the name of "Turnitin" this software is innovation of I-Paradigm Company. It's a leading software which is used in overall the world for intellectual right protection purpose. This online software tool assists in highlighting the plagiarized data and material from different sources such as books, internet sources, other student paper etc. First time in 2007 this facility was provided to public sector universities of Pakistan. In the first phase, HEC has been provided this facility of software in 127 higher education institutions. Presently more than 8000 instructors are registered, two lacks papers have been submitted and generate reports of TURNITIN. At present HEC accounted Zero Tolerance policy for plagiarism. In this connection HEC advises and guides the universities how to work for honest academic writing in universities and how to use TURNITIN software in effective way.⁽²⁾

Conclusion & Suggestion

In the end it is concluded that Islam is a religion of truthfulness and always supports for the rights of other, in different verses of Qur'ān and Ahādīth it is proved that Islam gives the clear idea about how to avoid plagiarism. It is also important to know that plagiarism is not only copying the work of others, it's also includes someone failing to cite the sources properly, or paraphrase the work of others and mix words or sentences and try to make it own. Thus, in short plagiarism is unethical and a serious crime in academic world. In Pakistan, HEC has been working hard to stop plagiarism in higher education institutions and trying to inculcate the environment for honest academic writing. So in short, Islam seriously

(1) <http://www.hec.pk.com>

(2) Ibid

prohibits the plagiarism and clearly indicates how to use the work of other. It is suggested that Muslim Ummah should also develop the copyright rules and regulation for amount of citations and quotation for academic purpose. Verses of Qur'ān and Ahādīths quotation and citations should be used for necessary academic purposes. Last but not least, for copyright or intellectual property laws" Ijtihad "is the one way to decide the rules of intellectual property right for the sake of honest academic writing.
